1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

were at home. We beg him to number us among his children.' This I did at once by putting my hands on the head of each chief, which is the usual ceremony, answered by loud shouts of joy and thanks. I then said to the Assiniboines: 'I am sending four Frenchmen to my fort to give my news there; I recommend you to get them to that place as soon as you can. I have left powder in the village, and all that is necessary to have them brought.' The council ended with loud thanks from both parties. As the Assiniboines did not yet speak of leaving, although they had purchased all they were able to do, such as painted ox robes, deer skin, dressed buckskin and ornamented furs and feathers, painted feathers and peltry, wrought garters, circlets for the head, girdles. These people dress leather better than any of the other nations and work in furs and feathers very tastefully, which the Assiniboines are not capable of doing. They are cunning traders, cheating the Assiniboines of all they may possess, such as muskets, powder, balls, kettles, axes, knives or awls. Seeing the great consumption of food daily by the Assiniboines, and afraid that it would not last long, they set afloat a rumor that the Sioux were near and that several of their hunters had noticed them. The Assiniboines fell into the trap and made up their minds quickly to decamp, not wishing to be obliged to fight. A Mandan chief let me understand by a sign that the rumor about the Sioux was to get rid of the Assiniboines. At six in the morning they all left in great haste, believing that the Sioux were near and fearing that the road might be blocked up. The chief with whom I had lodged brought five men to remain with me, saying: 'My father, I still hope that you will join us for a little; I march peaceably. Here are five of my young men, whom I give thee to remain with thee and to guide thee when thou shall wish to leave.' I made him a small present to thank him, telling him that he knew that I had sense and that I intended shortly to reward him for his attention. He left with great protestations of friendship. I was notified shortly after that an interpreter whom I had paid liberally to secure him had decamped in spite of all the offers which my son, the Chevalier, had made him, as he was going after an Assiniboine woman with whom he had fallen in love, but who would not remain with him. He was a young man of the Cree nation, speaking good Assiniboine. As there were several Mandans who spoke it well enough, I made myself very well under-

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764 length was pronounced by his brother, in which he impressed on their minds, the great importance which the deceased man had been to their nation; rehearsed his war exploits, and concluded by urging all to follow his example, and to become of equal usefulness to their tribe. Then they would be sure of following and becoming companions of him, and all the other great warriors, which had died before, in the world of spirits. After this address was closed, provisions were brought out, consisting of boiled dog's flesh, of which the company just tasted, and then a bowl full of it was presented to the dead man. He was then taken up by four men and carried outside of the village, just into the edge of the woods, and placed on a stage which had been previously erected, about ten feet high. The bowl of food was brought and set by his head, and his arms and accoutrements laid by his side. In this manner their dead are deposited, and are never buried. The wife and relations of the deceased made the most violent and dreadful howlings, tearing their hair and appearing to be in the deepest anguish, under the loss they had sustained."

142 **Complexion, Etc.** "The Mandans and the Gros Ventres are of the lightest complexion, and largest Indians on the Missouri. Their hair inclines to a chestnut color, and in some instances has a slight curl; it is never so lank and course as most other Indians. Their eyes are full and lively, their cheek bones rather high, and their countenances open and agreeable. The Gros Ventres have more of a fierce, savage look, than the Mandans who are courteous 291 and sociable in their behavior. They are neat in their dress, which is similar to that of the Rus, except that they decorate it with white rabbit, and white ermine skins. Many of their lodges, or 353 huts, are decorated in a beatiful manner; having the inside lined with the richest furs, such as the lynx, beaver, otter, white rabbit, martin, fox, mountain cat and white ermine, sewed together like patch-work, which gives them a rich and beautiful appearance. The lodge of the head chief was sixty feet in diameter, elegantly lined with furs, and the seats, which are also used as beds, were covered with the grizzly bear and buffalo skins. These people keep their lodges and buildings in a state of great neatness. They • 439 cultivate the same kind of produce with the Rus, and carry on a trade with the roving Indians, who occasionally visit them. The 648 Mandans and Gros Ventres live in great friendship, although

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cloudy with some snow. About seventy lodges of Assiniboines and some Knistenaux are at the Mandan village, and this being the day of adoption and exchange of property between them all, it is accompanied by a dance, which prevents our seeing more than two Indians today. These Knistenaux are a band of Chippeways whose language they speak. They live on the Assiniboine and Saskashawan rivers, and are about two hundred and forty men." (id 173)

Hostilities With Assiniboines and Knistenauxs. "Sunday, November 18. Today we had a cold windy morning. The Black Cat came to see us, and occupied us for a long time with questions on the usages of our country. He mentioned that a council had been held yesterday to deliberate on the state of their affairs. It seemed that not long ago, a party of Sioux fell in with some horses belonging to the Minnetarees, and carried them off; but in their flight they were met by some of the Assiniboines, who killed the Sioux and kept the horses. A Frenchman, too, who had lived many years among the Mandans, was lately killed on his route to the British factory on the Assiniboine. Some smaller differences existed between the two nations, all of which being discussed, the council decided that they would not resent the recent insults from the Assiniboines and Knistenaux, until they had seen whether we had deceived them or not in our promises of furnishing them with arms and ammunition. They had been disappointed in their hopes of receiving them from Mr. Evans, and were afraid that we too, like him, might tell them what was not true. We advised them to continue at peace, that supplies of every kind would no doubt arrive for them, but that time was necessary to organize the trade. The fact is, that the Assiniboines treat the Mandans as the Sioux do the Ricaras; by their vicinity to the British they get all the supplies, which they withhold or give at pleasure to the remoter Indians. The consequence is, that however badly treated, the Mandans and Ricaras are very slow to retaliate, lest they should lose their trade altogether." (id 175.)

Fort Mandan. "Tuesday, 20th. We this day moved into our huts, which are now completed. This place, which we call Ft. Mandan, is situated in a point of low ground, on the north side of the Missouri, covered with tall and heavy cottonwood. The works consist of two rows of huts or sheds, forming an angle

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323 the whites came among them; and that when they saw the bril-
301 liantly colored beads of the traders, they conceived the idea of improving their art by using these beads. If they ever possessed the art of making glass de novo, there is no record, tradition, or other evidence of it, that I have been able to find."

Was It Ancient Art. "One of many reasons, though perhaps an insufficient reason, for believing the art to be of no recent origin among them, is that they used the triangular pendants, not as ornaments only, but as evidences of betrothal, as long ago as
[584] the oldest men can remember. When a girl was promised in marriage in her infancy by her parents, as was not infrequently done, one of these pendants was tied to her forelock so as to hang down over her forehead. When the promise was fulfilled, the husband removed the pendant and threw it away." (p. 22-23.)

439 **Inter-Tribal Trade.** "With the nomadic tribes around, they exchanged their agricultural produce for horses, and, recently, for robes. When the Dakotas saw a certain flower (Liatris punc-
[824] tata) blooming on the prairie, they knew that the corn was ripe, and went to the villages of the farming Indians to trade. From
721 the time they came in sight of the village to the time they disappeared there was a truce. When they had passed beyond the bluffs, they might steal an unguarded pony or lift a scalp, and were in turn liable to be attacked." (p. 27.)

439 **Trade With Pacific Coast—Shells.** "It appears probable that they once carried on trade indirectly with the tribes of the Pacific coast, for they had Dentalium shells similar to those obtained on the Pacific and they prized them so highly that the white traders found it advisable to obtain them for the trade. As late as 1866, ten of these shells, of inferior size, costing the traders only a cent a piece, would buy a superior buffalo robe, and formerly only two or three of the same quality were paid for a robe. Modern traders, with whom the writer had conversed, obtained their shells from eastern importers, and know nothing of the original source of supply. They supposed them to come from the Atlantic coast or the Great Lakes, and called them 'Iroquois shells,' which is probably their corruption of the Chinook 'hyakwa;' but it is possible the reverse is the case.

439 "They also used, and still use, as ornaments, fragments of the
301 **Abalone** shells (one or more species of **Haliotis**) of the Pacific.

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These are now supplied to the trade under the name of California shells. Ten years ago, one of these shells, unpolished, sold for a good robe. There is little doubt that they used Abalone, Dentalium, and other sea shells before the traders brought them. Old traders and old Indians say so. Even as late as 1833, it would seem that they had not yet become a regular part of a trader's outfit; for Maximilian says of the Mandans: 'They do not disfigure the bodies; only they make some apertures in the outer rim of the ear, in which they hang strings of beads, brass, or iron rings of different sizes, or shells, the last of which they obtain from other Indian tribes. If they are questioned respecting these shells, they answer that they were brought from the sea." (p. 28.)

Matthews quotes the following expressions from D. D. Mitchell, found in Schoolcraft's work, concerning visitors to the Mandans in the eighteenth century:

McIntosh's Early Visit. "In a letter published in Schoolcraft's **Information Respecting the Indian Tribes,** the writer, D. D. Mitchell, says, speaking of the Mandans: 'The early portion of their history I gather from the narration of Mr. McIntosh, who, it seems, belonged to, or was in some way connected with, the French trading company as far back as 1772. According to his narration, he set out from Montreal in the summer of 1773, crossing over the country to the Missouri river, and arrived at one of the Mandan villages on Christmas day.' I have never seen McIntosh's account, nor have I seen any more extensive notice of it than the one given by Mr. Mitchell; and from this, it does not appear that McIntosh visited any of these agricultural Indians except the Mandans." (p. 29.)

And Matthews expresses the view that British and French traders and interpreters were among the Mandans prior to 1804, all of which appears in evidence hereinbefore submitted. He believes the earliest Europeans to reach them were from Hudson Bay territory, but he was, as he admits (p. 29), unaware of Verendrye's expedition referred to by Catlin, who is criticised by Matthews for failing to "tell us where the account of the expedition of 1738 is to be found," adding: "No other mention of the journey has ever been seen by me."

Matthews thus refers to the peaceable relations nearly always existing between the Mandans and Rees and the Americans:

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

a bunch of sage in her lodge and rubbed her body after returning from the fields to cleanse herself from the spirits in the gardens. Years ago, it is said that, when this was done, worms came out of the women's bodies. The Corn bundle-owner walked through the gardens several times during the summer, carrying the pipe and singing the Corn songs.

When the weather was too hot, too cold, or too dry, all those with Corn medicine rights met, and the Goose Women's Society joined them to dance and pray. While the ceremony was in progress, people of each household brought presents and offered them for relief from the adverse weather.

Many women pledged a ceremony to the Corn if good crops were sent by the gods. A person making such a vow, first prepared an elkhide robe and paid the Corn Priest to officiate. When the time appointed for the offering came and after the crop was harvested, she carried the robe to her field, where she tied it to a cottonwood pole and covered the pole with corn on the ear until the pile reached nearly to the robe. The young men of the tribe were invited to come and charge the robe, the first one there taking it. At a signal, the young men searched for the meat under the pile of corn. The Corn bundle-owner received four things for his part in the ceremony. Many different women gave this ceremony each fall when the crops were abundant.

The Corn bundle-owner officiated whenever corn was sold to people of other tribes. It was thought that it must be done or the spirits in the corn might leave the Mandan and help the people who took the corn away. He dressed in his ceremonial outfit and "called back" the Corn Spirits.

Whenever a cache of stored corn was opened, four ears of corn were taken to the Corn bundle-owner as payment for his part in protecting the stored corn.

The order of Corn Priests is as follows:

1. Uses Head for Rattle
2. Brown
3. Pot
4. Bull Leg
5. Acting Foolish (OxinhEdE)
6. Foolish Man
7. Strong Arm
8. Raises Tail
9. Forearm Bone
10. Hunts His Enemy
11. Bull Standing on Land
12. WErukirihEri
13. Enemy
14. Sacred Cedar
15. Cedar Feather
16. Star
17. Head Comes Out
18. Water Bag
19. Coyote
20. Crow
21. WErukirihEri
22. Bloody Knife
23. Garden
24. Tree in Garden
25. Uses His Head for Rattle
26. HoxdEkE
27. Corn Grinder
28. Lying Down
29. Left-Hand Bull
30. Scabby
31. WErukirihEri
32. Crows Belt
33. Moves Slowly
34. Scattercorn
35. Mrs. Little Owl (present owner)

The many references to corn in the mythology express the significance of agriculture to this tribe. Archeological work in their prehistoric sites indicates that economically agriculture has played an important role in shaping the habits of these people. The primary factor in establishing villages at certain

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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Island in South Dakota and was told by traders that there were a number of others about that country. Maximilian was told that the Mandans first touched the Missouri at White Earth River in South Dakota, with which might be connected the reported existence of the remains of circular earth lodges in southern Wisconsin. Here are arguments for both theories; up to the present, however, the matter must remain unsettled until some careful investigation decides it.

HISTORY:—In the earliest historical accounts the Mandans were firmly established in stationary villages in the neighborhood of the Heart River. Verendrye says that they lived in six large villages along the Mandan River, were a large and powerful nation and feared none of their neighbors, all of whom they dominated by their superior culture. Their manufactures were almost necessities among the other tribes, and in trade they were able to dictate their own terms. The forts he said were impregnable to Indians, being very well fortified. Verendrye visited the smallest village in which he said that there were one hundred and thirty houses by actual count. His son, who visited one of the larger villages, declared that it was twice as large, judging from which it can safely be assumed that there were at least one thousand houses in the several villages. Lewis and Clarke declared that in the two villages of one hundred huts there were three hundred and fifty warriors; figuring at this rate there should have been at least fifteen thousand Mandans in 1738 dwelling prosperously in large and well-fortified towns.

For the next sixty-six years there is little information but their own tradition. Judging from McKenzie's narrative they continued prosperous and powerful up to 1772 at least. He declared that at that time they lived in nine villages, large and near to each other, and could muster fifteen thousand warriors. The latter estimate is probably large, but the whole statement seems to show that no misfortune had come to them at that date. Their remaining history is summed up in their own tradition as related to Lewis and Clarke, Maximilian and others.

This tradition runs as follows:—Formerly they lived happily and prosperously in nine large villages on the Missouri near the mouth of the Heart River. Six or seven of these vil-

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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garters and belts of buffalo hair. But they did make string and willow matting. There is an account of a mat used on the seat before the fire. Henry[1] says that the mat was of small willows of equal size, fastened together by thread of native make passed through each stick about one foot apart. The mats were ten feet long, four feet broad, and the two ends for two and a half feet were raised slanting from the ground and supported by a kind of sofa. Verendrye says they made wicker work very neatly, flat, and in baskets.

The Mandans used snow-shoes which were only about two and a half feet long.[2] For their dyes and paints they made use of the following: red obtained from buffalo-berries, black from sunflowers, and yellow from a kind of moss which came from the Rocky Mountains. Blue, red, black, yellow and white clays were also used.

An indispensable article of the full dress was the fan. These were made from the large plumes of the eagle, hawk, crow, and a number of other birds, depending on the rank of the owner.

The Mandan pipes differed a trifle from those of their neighbors, being less ornate.[3] They were either of stone, black clay, or yellow clay painted black. The stone pipes were obtained mostly from the Dakotas. Pipes with wooden bowls, lined with stone, were also used. The stem was long and round or flat. Catlin describes one pipe as of red steatite (catlinite) with a stem three feet long, half its length wound with braids of porcupine quills. They also had the calumet pipe which will be considered in connection with the ceremonies.

The Mandans and their neighbors the Arikara and Hidatsa made glass beads, an art which they claimed was taught to them by the Snake Indians. They did not make the glass but used glass obtained through the whites. Lewis and Clarke[4] give a short account of the manufacture of beads which is exceedingly interesting. It may be thus summarized. The secret is known only to a few. Glass of several colors is pounded fine, each color separate; this is washed in several waters until the glass stops staining the water. They then take an

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, p. 340.
[2] Ibid., p. 301.
[3] Maximilian: p. 300.
[4] March 16, 1805.

3: Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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Among a number of other customs, was treaty making with other tribes. This was well described by Henry who accompanied the Mandans and Hidatsa when they went to make a treaty with the Cheyennes. Most of the people went on these treaty visits; the band marched in a procession of fixed order and a number of ceremonial objects were carried exposed throughout the march. The party was met with great ceremony by the new allies and its members were taken into their houses. Several days of ceremonial feasting occurred and finally the head chief of each party adopted a son from the other tribe. After this there was more feasting and several days of trade between the two bands, when both returned home.

The adoption of sons occurred also among the different families. Maximilian describes the adoption of a "medicine son" to whom a sacred pipe was given. The man chose his adopted son through a dream. The new pipe was consecrated and gifts were showered upon the son's family by the adopted father and his relatives. A dance and feast was then held. This custom was prevalent over all the Missouri region.

There were a number of men who dressed and acted like women and were treated in every way as such. These men claimed to follow this life by an order from the spirits given to them in a dream.

Catlin says that the Mandans did not have slaves and there is no mention of them elsewhere. The Arikara, however, had a regular slavery system, and the Crows made slaves and sold them on the Missouri. The Mandans were very good at the sign language so Maximilian tells us. They were expert swimmers, and collected their whole supply of wood by swimming out and towing in the drift wood at the time of the spring breakups.

In point of general culture the Mandans were superior to any of their immediate neighbors, surpassing even the other sedentary people, the Hidatsa and Arikara. Catlin says that they had advanced far in the arts of manufacture and had more comforts and luxuries than other tribes. When Verendrye saw them he, too, was struck by their superior skill. He said that the Mandans dressed leather and worked in feathers better

3: Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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T78 medicine bags as Maximilian calls them, seem to have been much less important than among the Arikara. Nevertheless these bundles were by no means absent. Maximilian relates that each man had his own medicine bag, the contents of which no one else might see. In addition to this there was a large medicine bag in the medicine lodge within which, Maximilian tells us, were preserved three sacred skulls, those of the chief who had led them out from underground, of his sister, and of his brother — also this chief's rattle. In the medicine lodge were also the sacred rattle and the four drums of hide, filled with water, which were made to resemble turtles and which they claimed, according to Catlin, they had always had. They had a sacred pipe or calumet also, which Maximilian was not allowed to see, the price of looking at it alone being placed at one hundred dollars. He says[1] that it was very hard for the Mandans to get these sacred pipes and much more trouble to consecrate them. Certain things must be hung upon them and among these was the skull of an animal which at that time was not found in the vicinity, and for which an enormous price had to be given. There were many other pipes called medicine pipes belonging to private owners, these however were merely ordinary pipes which had been consecrated by the ceremony already described. Each Mandan regarded his own medicine as a sacred animal, and in addition there were several animals which were regarded as sacred throughout the whole tribe. Owls and screech owls were kept in the lodges to predict the future. The war-eagle was considered as having great medicine power and they kept all sorts of birds of prey alive in the huts for their plumes. Geese were considered to be very sacred also, first because in one of their tales the Lord of Life turned into a goose and flew away with a flock of them, and also as they are the messengers of the Old Woman Who Never Dies or the Corn Mother. Of greatest importance among these sacred animals, however, was the white buffalo, whose hide was the most valuable article that a Mandan could possess. The hides were bought mostly from other nations, they were tanned with horns and hoofs on, and were not valuable unless of heifers

T78 825

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[1] Op. cit., p. 430.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NO17 Mandan NO17

wanting even in old people, though, in the latter, they are often worn very short, which is chiefly to be attributed to their chewing hard, dry meat. The women are pretty robust, and sometimes tall, but, for the most part, they are short and broad shouldered. They are but few who can be called handsome as Indians, but there are many tolerable and some pretty faces among them. It is usually said of the Mandan women that they, in some respects, have a natural conformation, such as Le Vaillant and Peron ascribe to the Hottentot women; but it seems to be owing, in the Mandan women, less to nature than to artificial means.* The children have frequently slender limbs, and very prominent bellies. Deformed persons are very rare among the Mandans. I, however, saw a very little dwarf with a long, narrow face, and one man who squinted. Persons who had lost the sight of one eye, or with a cataract, are by no means uncommon. There were several deaf and dumb, among whom two brothers and a sister were all born with this defect. Some goitres, or, rather, thick necks among the women, are, doubtless, caused by too great exertions in carrying burdens on their backs. Instances where joints of the fingers are wanting are frequent, but these come under the head of voluntary mutilations.

The colour of these Indians is a fine brown, sometimes reddish, more or less dark, which might, sometimes, come under the denomination of copper colour. In some it is more of a greyish-brown, in others yellowish; after a thorough ablution the skin of some of them appears almost white, and even some colour in their cheeks.† They do not disfigure their bodies, only they make some apertures in the outer rim of the ear, in which they hang strings of beads, brass or iron rings of different sizes, or shells, the last of which they obtain from other Indian tribes. If they are questioned respecting these shells, they answer that they were brought from the sea. These Indians are vain, and in this respect childish, like all savage nations. They are very fond of ornament, and the young men have always a little looking-glass suspended from their wrists. The traders sell these looking-glasses in a pasteboard case, which, however, is immediately changed for a solid wooden frame, and attached to the wrist by a red ribbon or a leather strap. The looking-glasses are framed in various ways; the rude frame is often painted red, or with stripes of different colours, with footsteps of bears or buffaloes carved on it. Nay, sometimes these

* Haec deformitas a viris ipsis ut dicunt, tractibus saepe teputiis producitur. In nonnullis labia externa in orbem ferme ad quatuor digitis transversos prominent; in aliis labia interna valde pendent; immo virorum ars in partibus ipsis figuras artificiose factas format.

Feminae hae excisiae earum parvi momenti, et neglectae sunt.

Morbi ex in Mandanis, Maxonitoviis, et in Crows, magis notum in Maxonitoviis; in Mandanis, a mulieribus dissolutis, magis quam ab aureolibus hic non perversus affluitur.

† Volney has many inaccuracies in what he says of the colour of the Indians. (Vol. II. p. 433.) According to him, the children are born quite white like the Europeans; that the women are white on the thighs, hips, and lower parts of the body, where the skin is covered by the clothing; that it is wholly erroneous to suppose that the copper colour is natural to them, &c. Mr. Von Humboldt has long since refuted all these assertions.

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

262 which is so favourite a dish among the northern Indians, is not much in use among the Mandans. Their only drink is water, for they are unacquainted with the method of preparing fermented [273] liquors. They did not obtain any spirits, either from the American Fur Company, or the agents of Messrs. Soublette and Campbell; hence an intoxicated person is scarcely ever seen. They are extremely fond of sugar, and likewise of salt, which they procure from their lakes, and, if the supply is insufficient, purchase from the Whites. They are likewise fond of coffee and tea, well sweetened. It has been affirmed, that several North American nations, especially those which speak the Algonquin language, are cannibals, and more particularly the Chippeways and the Potawatomis; but I found no trace of this unnatural custom among the Missouri nations.

592 Two, and sometimes three, families usually live together in an Indian hut, commonly the
595 father, with his married sons or sons-in-law. Polygamy is everywhere practised, and the number
596 of wives differs; however, they have very seldom more than four, and, in general, only one. The women are very skilful in various kinds of work, particularly in dyeing and painting the buffalo
386 robes. They extract a red colour from the roots of the savoyenne, or from buffalo berries; yel-
824 low from a lichen of the Rocky Mountains; black from helianthus, as well as from a black stone
439 or clay; blue and green they extract from European substances. Among the Mandans, Manitaries, and Arikkaras, the women, as Lewis and Clarke relate, manufacture beads from coloured glass. They powder those which they have obtained from the traders, and mould them into different shapes. This custom is, however, no longer common. The dyeing of the skins, of
323 which many travellers have spoken, employs a great portion of the women's time. These three nations understand the manufacture of earthen pots and vessels, of various forms and sizes. The clay is of a dark slate colour, and burns a yellowish-red, very similar to what is seen in the burnt tops of the Missouri hills. This clay is mixed with flint or granite, reduced to powder by the action of fire. The workwoman forms the hollow inside of the vessel by means of a round stone which she holds in her hand, while she works and smooths the outside with a piece of poplar bark. When the pot is made, it is filled and surrounded with dry shavings, and then burnt,
501 when it is ready for use. They know nothing of glazing. With respect to their boats, the North Americans are far more expert than the Brazilians, Patagonians, and other South Americans, who live on the banks of rivers, and yet have contrived no means to pass them. The Chippeways and other northern nations have handsome vessels of birch bark; the Esquimaux makes his kiack, which is curiously covered with seal skin; and on the Missouri, especially among the Mandans, there are boats of buffalo skin, which are represented in the plates accompanying this work. They are very light, of a circular form, stretched on a frame of several pieces of wood crossing each other, and may be carried on the shoulder of a single individual.

584 If a young Indian desires to marry, and has obtained the consent of the girl, he endeavours to procure that of her father; when he is certain of this, he brings two, three, nay, even eight or

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

600 771 778 276 at least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote. One of their chiefs never smoked out of a stone pipe, but always used a wooden one. Mato-Topé never partook of other people's tobacco, but always smoked by himself, with the doors shut. They do not willingly show their medicines or amulets, which are usually kept wrapped up in a bundle or bag, and never opened except on important occasions. They have particular medicine pipes, or, as the English call them, medicine stems, which are uncovered and used for smoking only on solemn occasions. Many make such pipes according to their own taste; such, for instance, was the pipe of Dipauch (Plate XXI. fig. 3). The bowl was nearly in the form of a Turkish pipe, and was made of brownish-red clay; the tube, which was rather short and thick, represented the lord of life in human form, but which it required some stretch of the imagination to discover. The nation preserves a celebrated pipe of this kind as a sacred relic, which no stranger is permitted to see. It has been in their possession since remote ages, and they offered to show it to me for the value of 100 dollars. The Indians cannot obtain such pipes but at a considerable expense: many of the necessary ornaments are not to be procured among them, such as the upper bill and the red crown of a species of woodpecker (*Picus pileatus*, Linn.), a bird which is not found so high up the Missouri. For the head of one of these woodpeckers, which was brought from St. Louis, they gave a large handsome buffalo robe, worth six or eight dollars. If a man possesses such a pipe, he sometimes conceives the idea of adopting a medicine son. The young man whom he is to choose appears to him in a dream; it is, however, requisite that he should be of a good family, or have performed some exploit. He acquaints him with his intention, and, after having provided two similar medicine pipes, he asks his newly-adopted son, whether he is ready to undergo the ceremony of the pipes? The latter frequently answers in the affirmative, and the time for the ceremony is fixed: but, if he has not yet made up his mind, it is deferred. The adoptive father then chooses two young men, who practise the medicine dance together, with the two pipes in their hands. The father often dances, in the morning, on the roof of his hut, and instructs these two young men. When the time arrives, and the adopted son is ready for the ceremony, the father, with all his relations, and the two young dancers, repairs to the hut of his newly-chosen son, and brings him a present of maize, cloth, blankets, kettles, and other valuable articles. The father takes his son by the hand and makes him sit down, after which the company dance round him, with the two pipes; they sing, accompanied by the drum and schischikué, the two young dancers keeping time to the music with their pipes. When the ceremony is over, and the presents laid in one or two heaps, the relations of the medicine son bring horses, cloth, blankets, and other things of value, which the two parties reciprocally divide between them. The father then again takes his son by the hand, makes him rise from his seat, and dresses him in new clothes from head to foot, and likewise paints his face according to his fancy. The dress and pipe are henceforth his property, and he is considered as a real son, who must support and defend his father.

435 439 597 796 171

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

This custom exists among most of the nations on the Missouri, and even among the Esquimaux there is a somewhat similar usage. If the adopted son and father have not happened to meet for a long time, they make presents to each other; the father gives the son a new dress, and the latter presents him with a good horse. Among all the Indian nations of North America, there is a particular class of men, who are specially engaged in all the above-mentioned ceremonies and medicines. They are, also, the physicians, and are called, among the Mandans, Numak-Choppenih, which signifies medicine man.

The skin of a white buffalo cow is an important article, and an eminent medicine in the opinion of the Mandans and Manitaries. He who has never possessed one of them is not respected. Suppose two men to be disputing about their exploits, the one an old veteran warrior, who has slain many enemies, the other, a young lad without experience; the latter reproaches the other with never having possessed a white buffalo cow hide, on which the old man droops his head, and covers his face for shame. He who possesses such a hide generally offers it to the lord of life, to whom he dedicates it, or, which is equivalent, to the sun, or to the first man. He collects, perhaps, in the course of a whole twelvemonth, various articles of value, and then hangs them up all together on a high pole in the open prairie, generally in the neighbourhood of the burying-place, or in the village before his hut. Distinguished men and chiefs of eminence are for the most part poor, because, in order to gain reputation and influence, they give away everything of value which they possess. A large number of relatives is one of the chief means of acquiring riches, for a young man who wishes to distinguish himself, and to be liberal, does honour to the whole family, who assist him to the utmost of their power. When one of his relations has anything of value, the young man goes to the owner to demand it, and not unfrequently takes it away without ceremony. Sometimes he hangs his head in silence, and then something of value is given him, a handsome dress, a horse, &c. If he wishes to gain reputation and a claim to distinction, it is necessary that he should make presents. All the people in the village notice very accurately what presents are made, and the donor has a right to display all such presents painted on his robes, and in this manner to hand down his reputation to posterity, as has been already related. This and military glory are, in the eyes of these men, the greatest virtues. They dare not draw a stroke too much on their robes for the horses, guns, &c., which they have given away, for the young men keep a most strict account against each other, and universal ridicule would be the immediate consequence of violating this rule. Among the distinctions of any man, the white buffalo hide is the greatest. He who has not been so fortunate as to kill a white buffalo himself, which is generally the case, as these animals are very rare, purchases a hide, often at a great distance from home, and other nations bring them hither, being well aware of the great value attached to them by the Mandans. The hide must be that of a young cow, not above two years old, and be taken off complete and tanned, with the horns,

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526 525 stake their liberty upon the issue of these games, offering themselves as slaves to their opponents in case they get beaten.

796 *Feasting* and *fasting* are important customs observed by the Mandans, as well as by most other tribes, at stated times and for particular purposes. These observances are strictly religious and rigidly observed. There are many of these forms practiced amongst the Mandans, some of which are exceedingly interesting, and important also, in forming a correct estimate of the Indian character; and I shall at a future period take particular pains to lay them before my readers.

782 *Sacrificing* is also a religious custom with these people, and is performed in many different modes, and on numerous occasions. Of this custom I shall also speak more fully hereafter, merely noticing at present, some few of the hundred modes in which these offerings are made to the Good and Evil Spirits. Human sacrifices have never been made by the Mandans, nor by any of the north western tribes (so far as I can learn), excepting the Pawnees of the Platte; who have, undoubtedly, observed such an inhuman practice in former times, though they have relinquished it of late. The Mandans sacrifice their fingers to the Great Spirit, and of their worldly goods, the best and the most costly; if a horse or a dog, it must be the favourite one; if it is an arrow from their quiver, they will select the most perfect one as the most effective gift; if it is meat, it is the choicest piece cut from the buffalo or other animal; if it is anything from the stores of the Traders, it is the most costly—it is blue or scarlet cloth, which costs them in this country an enormous price, and is chiefly used for the purpose of hanging over their wigwams to decay, or to cover the scaffolds where rest the bones of their departed relations.

Of these kinds of sacrifices there are three of an interesting nature, erected over the great medicine-lodge in the centre of the village—they consist of ten or fifteen yards of blue and black cloth each, purchased from the Fur Company at fifteen or twenty dollars per yard, which are folded up so as to resemble human figures, with quills in their heads and masks on their faces. These singular-looking figures, like "*scare crows*" (PLATE 47), are erected on poles about thirty feet high, over the door of the mystery-lodge, and there are left to decay. There hangs now by the side of them another, which was added to the number a few days since, of the skin of a white buffalo, which will remain there until it decays and falls to pieces.

782 439 This beautiful and costly skin, when its history is known, will furnish a striking proof of the importance which they attach to these propitiatory offerings. But a few weeks since, a party of Mandans returned from the Mouth of the Yellow Stone, two hundred miles above, with information that a party of Blackfeet were visiting that place on business with the American Fur Company; and that they had with them a white buffalo robe for sale. This was looked upon as a subject of great importance by the chiefs, and one worthy of public consideration. A white buffalo robe is a

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great curiosity, even in the country of buffaloes, and will always command an almost incredible price, from its extreme scarcity; and then, from its being the most costly article of traffic in these regions, it is usually converted into a *sacrifice*, being offered to the Great Spirit, as the most acceptable gift that can be procured. Amongst the vast herds of buffaloes which graze on these boundless prairies, there is not one in an hundred thousand, perhaps, that is white; and when such an one is obtained, it is considered great *medicine* or mystery.

On the receipt of the intelligence above-mentioned, the chiefs convened in council, and deliberated on the expediency of procuring the white robe from the Blackfeet; and also of appropriating the requisite means, and devising the proper mode of procedure for effecting the purchase. At the close of their deliberations, eight men were fitted out on eight of their best horses, who took from the Fur Company's store, on the credit of the chiefs, goods exceeding even the value of their eight horses; and they started for the Mouth of the Yellow Stone, where they arrived in due time, and made the purchase, by leaving the eight horses and all the goods which they carried; returning on foot to their own village, bringing home with them the white robe, which was looked upon by all eyes of the villagers as a thing that was vastly curious, and containing (as they express it) something of the Great Spirit. This wonderful anomaly laid several days in the chief's lodge, until public curiosity was gratified; and then it was taken by the doctors or high-priests, and with a great deal of form and mystery consecrated, and raised on the top of a long pole over the *medicine-lodge*; where it now stands in a group with the others, and will stand as an offering to the Great Spirit, until it decays and falls to the ground.

This Letter, as I promised in its commencement, being devoted to some of the customs peculiar to the Mandans, and all of which will be new to the world, I shall close, after recording in it an account of a laughable farce, which was enacted in this village when I was on my journey up the river, and had stopped on the way to spend a day or two in the Mandan village.

Readers, did you ever hear of "*Rain Makers?*" If not, sit still, and read on; but laugh not—keep cool and sober, or else you may laugh in the *beginning*, and cry at the *end* of my story. Well, I introduce to you a new character—not a *doctor* or a *high-priest*, yet a *medicine-man*, and one of the highest and most respectable order, a "*Rain Maker!*" Such dignitaries live in the Mandan nation, aye, and "*rain stoppers*" too; and even those also amongst their *conjurati*, who, like Joshua of old, have even essayed to stop the sun in his course; but from the inefficiency of their medicine or mystery, have long since descended into insignificance.

Well, the story begins thus:—The Mandans, as I have said in a former Letter, raise a great deal of corn; and sometimes a most disastrous drought will be visited on the land, destructive to their promised harvest. Such

Sections from Henry's Journal Not Printed in Neill's Version (page numbers refer to those in the Coues edition of Henry's Journal (1897):

224 [322] We had now a well-beaten path, but were several times in danger of breaking our necks in deep pits which the natives had dug in the path to catch wolves and foxes in winter. Some of them are 10 feet deep, hollowed out to a space about 30 feet in circumference, whilst the entrance is no wider than the foot-path and about five feet in length. Those holes are covered with dry grass at the season when wolves are good, and every morning are found to contain some of those animals. In summer the grass grows strong and high about the mouths, entirely concealing them, until one arrives upon the very brink and is in danger of tumbling in headlong.

491 241 [323] Before we reached the (Mandan) village, we passed through a wood about two miles long. The road was bad, deep with mud and mire, the river having overflowed there lately. Having got through this wood, we came to several plantations of corn, beans, squashes, and sunflowers—the latter, indeed, grow in every direction, without cultivation, at some distance from the fields, where the seed has been carried by the wind; but such are never gathered by the natives, as they are not so good as those that have been properly sown and taken care of.

262 574 [325] This was just to their own palate, as they seldom eat meat until it begins to smell. We were invited into several huts successively and presented with dried meat in a state of corruption, corn and beans, together with parched corn and fresh ears pounded up in a wooden mortar; this last dish we found good.

439 177 They soon asked us to trade, and brought buffalo robes, corn, beans, dried squashes, etc.; but we informed them that we did not come here for that purpose, merely to visit them and see the country. They could not comprehend why we should have come so far out of mere curiosity, and said that all white people who came there did so with a view to trade. They suspected that we had goods which we wished to take over the river to the other villages, and were anxious to prevent it. They plagued us until dark, when they retired disappointed.

[p. 384(A)]

832 repair to the cornfields and are soon followed by the young men,
834 who enjoy their company and take every liberty. The young
men then return, and, if no hunting party offers, pass the day on
461 the tops of the huts, sleeping in the sun, or strolling from hut to
526 hut, eating corn and smoking Missourie tobacco. At other times
they amuse themselves by running races either on foot or horseback,
and performing warlike manoeuvres; they have also a favorite
game which occupies much of their time.

512 [328]...this is the first work performed by the women in the
515 morning after having paid their devoirs to their lovers and washed
themselves in the Missourie. ...every family being provided
415 with a brass or copper kettle for the purpose of cooking flesh.
177 Whether this proceeds from superstition or not I cannot pretend to
771 say, but they assured me that any kind of flesh cooked in those
574 earthen pots would cause them to split. One or more of the largest
kind is constantly boiling prepared corn and beans, and all who come
in are welcome to help themselves to as much as they can eat of the
contents.

231 .....Early this morning our young hostler took our horses to feed
437 in the meadow but never allowed them to be for a moment out of
648 his sight, lest the Assiniboines or other enemies might steal them.
We purchased sweet corn, beans, meal, and various other trifles,
for which we paid in ammunition, beads, and tobacco.

●439 [329] It would have been in vain for us to attempt to prevail
upon anyone in this village to ferry us over; for, as long as a stranger
has any property, they wish him to trade all he brings in the first
village he enters, every village being ambitious of getting as many
439 European articles as they can, [330] particularly arms and ammuni-
609 tion. This is good policy; for, notwithstanding they are so near each
other, and live in amity, they are not free from jealousy, and have
578 often had serious misunderstandings, sometimes ending in the death
569 of an individual, and nearly occasioning civil war. They have also
to guard against their natural enemies, the Sioux, who are at no great
distance. The Pawnees, also, with whom the Mandanes formerly
lived in the same villages, are now their most inveterate enemies.
Arms and ammunition are, therefore, necessary articles, and every-
one has a stock of ball and powder laid up in case of emergency.

675 We packed up our purchases, and gave them into the care of the
673 landlord. These people are much given to thieving, but in the hut
[577] in which a stranger is lodged, his property may be left in perfect
security; none dare touch it, as the master conceives his honor
concerned in whatever is placed under his immediate protection.
Out of doors, if they can pick your pocket, or pilfer any article,